METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.—At the last general meeting, Lord Ebrington in the chair, several works, amounting to 2,103*l.* 4s. 11d., were ordered, and some remarks were made on a method of preserving the lives of workmen in dangerous sewers, after which a motion was read for authorising the printing of sheets from the block plan of the survey of the city of London, when Captain Dawson explained that the survey having cost only 19,000*l.* of the 24,000*l.* originally voted for it, it had been resolved to apply the remainder in liquidation of the expense of engraving the map, the cost of engraving per estimate being only 8*l.* 15s. a sheet, while each of at least six copies requisite would cost 20*l.* a sheet if done by manual labour. The whole block plan would comprise about 900 sheets of double elephant paper, and measure 100 feet in length by 72 in breadth. For convenience, therefore, the Court had ordered in addition a map on the reduced scale of one inch to the foot, occupying 44 sheets, and 22 feet in length by 14 in breadth. The more important of these sheets would no doubt be in the hands of the public at the end of the year. The sheets of the general map and of the block plan would be sold at 2s. a sheet. The sale of maps by the Government department of the Board had always increased in proportion to the reduction in charge. The motion was then put, and the printing of the map was ordered, as also that of the index map. An allowance of 3s. a week for the temporary behoof of the widow of Gee, who lost his life in the Kenilworth-street sewer, was then ordered, and the Court adjourned.

"AULD ROBIN GRAY."—A correspondent, with reference to a note appended to our article on Wrington Church, which appeared some time since (see p. 64, *ante*), says we were in error in attributing the authorship of "Auld Robin Gray" to the Rev. W. Leeves, rector of that parish; and that, on referring to vol. ii. p. 332, of "The Lives of the Lindsays," we shall find it was written in 1771, by Lady Anne Lindsay. This latter is quite true; but what we said was, that Mr. Leeves was the *composer* of "Auld Robin Grey," and if our correspondent will look back to the very page of the interesting book he has quoted, he will find it set forth that the music of the beautiful ballad in question is, "as usually stated," by the Rev. Mr. Leeves, of Wrington.

GLASS COATING FOR IRON ARTICLES.—At the late *soirée* of the President of the Civil Engineers, were some specimens of iron manufacture, coated with glass, from the Smethwick Iron works, near Birmingham. In coating plates, roofing tiles, tubing, kettles, cauldrons, &c. &c., by this method, the article is first cleansed in an acid solution, and then covered with a glutinous preparation, over which is laid a coat of glass, ground to a fine powder. In a furnace the glass is then fused. In ornamental dinner plates foliage and designs are given in relief, executed by a kind of stenciling: one colour being put on, it is transferred to the kiln and fixed: when cold, another colour is added, again fixed, and withdrawn; and so on till the design is completed. The invention may hereafter be applied to numerous purposes in decorative building and architecture.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY.—In reply to Colonel Rawdon, in the Commons, Lord John Russell lately announced that the report of the Picture Committee was ready, and would be shortly laid before the House; that the Royal Academy had responded to his lordship's proposal of removal, by expressing a general desire to comply with the wishes of the Government; but that, with the information now before them relative to the state of the national pictures, further inquiry should be made as to whether Trafalgar-square offered the best site for a national gallery, and what was the best mode of preserving the national pictures. For these purposes a select committee is to be appointed, as far as possible comprising the members of the committee already formed.

DRAYTON CHURCH.—The following is a list of tenders for the restoration of St. Martin's church, West Drayton. Mr. C. Innes, architect.

Carter and Ellis	£1,683
G. Hartly	1,528
T. Hardy	1,060
J. Hullis	1,006
Pennidge and Son, Uxbridge	940

Comment is thrown away.

TESTIMONIAL TO THE ARCHITECT OF THE LONDON COAL EXCHANGE.—We learn from the daily papers that the coal factors and merchants of the City of London have presented to Mr. Bunning, the City architect, a valuable piece of plate, weighing 222 ounces, thus inscribed:—"Presented to J. B. Bunning, Esq., by the coal factors and merchants of the City of London, as a testimonial of their admiration of his genius and judgment in the erection of the *Coal Exchange*, and of his urbanity throughout the progress of a structure which is not more approved of by those for whose use and convenience it was designed than by the public at large, for its taste and elegance as a work of art. Anno Domini MDCCCL." Such acknowledgments are rarer than they should be.

GLASS.—A return has been published relative to the export and import trade in foreign and British glass, from which it appears that in the year ending January, 1850, the following quantities of foreign glass were imported. Of window glass, white or of one colour, not exceeding one-ninth of an inch in thickness, 25,555 cwt., of which 7,671 were retained for home consumption, producing 1,208*l.* duty, at the rate of 3s. 6d. per cwt.; of all glass exceeding one-ninth of an inch in thickness, silvered or polished, 68,106 square feet, of which 61,946 were retained for home consumption, producing 1,224*l.* duty; of glass painted or otherwise ornamented, 2,701 square feet, of which 841 were retained for home consumption, producing 31*l.* duty, at 9d. per square foot; of white flint glass bottles, not cut, 47,896 lbs., of which 33,326 were retained for home consumption, producing 48*l.*, duty ¼d. per lb.; of all other white flint glass goods, not cut or ornamented, 71,502 lbs., of which 27,805 were retained for home consumption, producing 114*l.* duty, at the rate of 1d. per lb.; of cut coloured or ornamented glass of all kinds, 733,717 lbs., of which 571,336 were retained for home consumption, producing 4,752*l.* duty, at the rate of 2d. per lb.; of other glass, not otherwise described, 188 cwt., the quantity retained for home consumption being 134 cwt., producing 22*l.*, at the rate of 3s. 6d. per cwt. The quantities of British glass exported during the same period have been as follows:—flint glass, 18,184 cwt.; window glass, 17,386 cwt.; plate glass, 50,920 square feet; common glass bottles, 233,108 cwt.; looking glasses and mirrors, to the value of 6,597*l.*

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.—The electric light was lately exhibited from Sunderland South Pier Lighthouse, by Mr. Staites, with the view of adopting it as a permanent means of illuminating the lighthouse and new docks, the latter of which are to be opened on the 18th inst. It is said to be likely, should the cost not prove an obstacle, that it will be forthwith adopted. We should have believed more fully the account of the trial with which a correspondent favoured us, if he had not gravely repeated a report that a sailor lighted his pipe by means of its *rays* and the assistance of a burning glass!

WATERLOO-BRIDGE COMPANY.—The annual meeting of proprietors has just been held. The report states that the tolls received during the half-year ending February 23 amounted to 7,637*l.* 11s. 3d.—4,630*l.* 1s. 3d. from foot passengers, and 3,007*l.* 10s. from carriages and horses. After paying expenses, and providing for interest due, besides a dividend of 2s. 10d. in the pound to annuitants, there remained a surplus of 195*l.* 14s. 10d. An improvement had taken place since February in tolls, which amount to 147*l.* 8s. 1d. more than last year.

BATHS AT THE SERPENTINE.—Would it not be well to appropriate that part of the Serpentine, in Hyde-park, now existing in the form of a cascade, to a building suited for purposes of bathing? the ground being so favourable to the flow of the water over hot plates, or any other heating medium, without the great expense consequent on raising, which in almost every other spot in London would be required. This structure would only require a front and ends, and could have on the greater part of its frontage a flat, thus making at all times a promenade suited to those whose taste for such scenes lead them to the spot. J. C.

*** The public would look jealously on any permanent building in the park.

PROPERTY IN GRAVEL AT BETHNAL-GREEN.—At *nisi prius* 40*l.* damages have been awarded to a proprietor of premises, let to a tenant who dug a hole in the ground, excavated gravel to an alleged value of 130*l.*, and afterwards filled it up with rubbish. The lease had no covenant, *pro* or *con.*, in contemplation of such a proceeding. Notice to cease excavation had been disregarded. Improvement of the drainage was alleged in defence. The judge considered the plaintiff herself liable to the ground landlord for such injury done to the property.

"CALF TORTURING."—I am sincerely glad to observe that the respectable provincial capital of Derby has taken up the above distressing subject. And now that humanity is informed—and that ignorance of shocking barbarity existing can be no excuse—no doubt a useful regret against unnecessary cruelties practised on an unoffending animal, will do its proper work in other parts of the kingdom. No man, no Christian, can have pleasure, or feel any quiet of heart and conscience, in partaking of the flesh of a tortured animal, had it been ten times more a luxury, and were the flesh much better than it would be if killed in its natural and proper manner, as in many other countries.—CIVIS.

MR. SMITH, OF DEANSTON.—We regret to find that this gentleman, so well known in sanitary matters, but especially noted for his improvements in the drainage of land, expired suddenly, on Monday week, at Catrine, in Ayrshire.

SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBERS AT TILBURY.—A descent was made some time since into these chambers, by Mr. J. Cook, of Aveley, who says.—"The shafts are five in number, and are situated at the edge of Hanging-wood, in the parish of Chadwell, about three miles from Grays pier. I descended two of them by means of a rope and pulley fixed to the branch of a neighbouring tree,—taking the precaution to have a lighted lantern swinging a few yards beneath me. They were between 80 and 90 feet in depth, their diameter at the top 6 feet, gradually diminishing to 3 feet at the bottom. I found five chambers communicating with one shaft—three on one side and two on the other. In form they are nearly semicircular. Their dimensions are small, not exceeding 30 feet in length by 15 in width, but very lofty: they were quite dry and free from foul air. The chambers in both shafts corresponded exactly with each other in size, form, and number." A further examination of these curious excavations is about to be made.

SHERBORNE CHURCH.—In the course of excavations here a sculptured stone figure, supposed to be of the Virgin, has been discovered. We are told that the statue is in a sitting position, and about 4 feet high. "An Antiquary" writes us from Sherborne, complaining that the Norman porch has been taken down, and that in the rebuilding it is proposed to finish the upper part in a very questionable manner. The ancient font, he says, which is to give place to a new one, is lying broken outside, surmounted at this moment by a wheel-barrow.

NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—On Monday night a debate took place in the Commons on the occasion of voting the annual instalment of means to proceed with the Houses, when Mr. Hume in his speech commented on Earl de Grey's remarks at the Institute, reported in THE BUILDER. The Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out that the extras were not so heavy as had been represented; and Sir Robert Peel followed with a strong speech in defence of Mr. Barry, in which he showed that many of the alterations and much of the expense had been incurred at the instance of members who now objected, and that Earl de Grey's remarks were just. The new House of Commons had been specially made shorter than the length of the present apartment, by desire of a committee of the House. The proceedings of the Fine Arts Commission were also shown to have been in accordance with the wishes of the Commons. After another onset by Mr. Osborne, the vote was agreed to by a large majority.*

* To the list of names appended to our report of meeting of the Institute whereat the medal was presented to Mr. Barry, we are requested to add those of Mr. Moore and Mr. Muir, Fellows; and of Mr. Wadmore, Associate.—[The names, by the way, are amusingly coincident.]

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